

**AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS**

The attached sheet(s) of drawings includes changes to Figures 1 and 2. No new matter has been added.

Attachment: Replacement sheets

Reconsideration of the application in light of the amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Claim 1 has been amended. Claim 9 has been added. No new matter has been added. Claims 1-9 are pending.

The drawings are objected to because improper crosshatching is used. Applicants thank the Examiner for the courtesy of a telephone call on October 16, 2007, to clarify for Applicants that the Examiner objected to depicting dust cover 7 and lubricant member 59 with crosshatching reserved for a metallic material. Instead, dust cover 7 is “an elastically deformable rubber or a soft synthetic resin, etc.” (Specification, p.6, second paragraph, corresponding to par. [0014] of the published application) and lubricant member 59 is, for example, grease (Specification, p.12, third line from the bottom, corresponding to par. [0027] of the published application). Applicants also thank the Examiner for suggesting that dust cover 7 be depicted as rubber or a synthetic material, and that lubricant member 59 be depicted as a liquid. Applicants have amended Figures 1 and 2 as suggested by the Examiner and consistent with MPEP § 608.02.

In view of the above remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of this objection.

**Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph**

Claims 1-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention. Regarding claim 1, the Examiner contends that it is unclear what is meant by the limitations “pipe-formed” and “dust cover inserted through said stud portion.”

Applicants have amended claim 1 to delete the phrase “approximately pipe-formed” which the Examiner contends was indefinite. Further, Figure 1 shows that the stud portion 6 makes contact with the dust cover 7 at the stud-side fitting portion 53, which “is fitted to an outer circumferential surface ... of the stud portion 6 in a closely fitted condition” (Specification page 9, last paragraph, corresponding to par. [0023] of the published application). Therefore, to overcome the second part of the Examiner’s rejection, Applicants have deleted “inserted through” and replacing it with “fitted around.”

In view of the above remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

**Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)**

Claims 1-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 3,423,114 to Gottschald *et al.* (“Gottschald”). Regarding claim 1, the Examiner contends that the beveled portions of Gottschald stud 5, meeting at the widest portion, correspond to brim portion 31 of the present invention.

Applicants note that brim portion 31 of the present invention is “disk-formed” (Fig. 1 and Specification page 8 line 5, corresponding to par. [0019] of the published application), with the brim portion 31 including a side end face 55 and an outer circumferential surface 57 (Fig. 1 and Specification p.10 par. 3 - p.12 par. 1, corresponding to par. [0025]-[0026] of the published

application). Further, end face **55** “serves as a seat surface when the ball joint **1** is attached to the to-be-attached portion” (Specification p. 8 par. 1, corresponding to par. [0019] of the published application).

In contrast, ball stud **5** of Gottschald is approximately cylindrical without a separate disk-formed brim portion. The beveled portion of ball stud **5** of Gottschald does not provide a separate side end face or outer circumferential surface as in the present invention. Furthermore, the beveled portion cannot serve as an end face because it is covered by the bellows **8** and the unlabelled structure below bellows **8**, and therefore it cannot serve as a seating surface seat to anything attached to the threaded area below ball stud **5**.

Therefore, Applicants have amended independent claim 1 to recite a brim portion “having an end face and an outer circumferential surface.” Rejected claims 2-8 depend upon independent claim 1 and should be allowable based on amended claim 1.

Applicants further note that the present invention includes a plug **11** integrally fixed with socket **16** and sealed to it by caulking portion **18** (Fig. 1, and Specification p. 7, second full paragraph, corresponding to par. [0017] of the published application). In contrast, housing cover **6** of Gottschald is a cup-shaped object which is screwed into housing **1** in order to close housing **1** (figure, and col. 2, lines 10-13). Therefore, Applicants added new claim 9, dependent upon claim 1, to recite a housing having an opening portion on one end, and closed on an opposite end by a plug caulked to the housing.

In view of the above remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

**CONCLUSION**

Each and every point raised in the Office Action dated August 24, 2007 has been addressed on the basis of the above amendments and remarks. In view of the foregoing it is believed that claims 1-8 are in condition for allowance and it is respectfully requested that the application be reconsidered and that all pending claims be allowed and the case passed to issue.

If there are any other issues remaining which the Examiner believes could be resolved through a Supplemental Response or an Examiner's Amendment, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number indicated below.

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Respectfully submitted,

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Attachments

**REPLACEMENT SHEET**